

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1-19 Canceled

20. (Original) A method for epicardial ablation comprising the steps of: gripping said epicardial surface with a gripper device comprising a plurality of arms, each arm having an inner and an outer surface, wherein at least one of said arms is moveable; and, an ablator wherein said ablator is disposed on said inner surface of at least one of said moveable arms; and applying said ablator to said epicardium such that cardiac conductive tissue is ablated.

21. (Original) The method of claim 20 wherein said step of applying said ablator comprises applying radio frequency energy to said ablator.

22. (Original) The method of claim 20 wherein said step of applying said ablator comprises applying DC current to said ablator.

23. (Original) The method of claim 20 wherein said step of applying said ablator comprises applying a cryogenic fluid to said ablator.

24. (Original) The method of claim 20 wherein said step of applying said ablator comprises applying laser energy to said ablator.

25. (Original) The method of claim 20 wherein said step of applying said ablator comprises applying ultrasound energy to said ablator.

26-68 Canceled

Please add new claims 69-75 as follows:

69. (New) A method of treating cardiac arrhythmia using epicardial ablation comprising the steps of:

providing a gripper device having a plurality of arms, each arm having an inner surface and an outer surface, wherein at least one of said arms is moveable relative to the other arm, the gripper device also having an ablator disposed on said inner surface of at least one of said moveable arms;

gripping an epicardial surface around an external surface of the heart with the gripper device to encircle a portion of the heart on the epicardial surface; and

applying said ablator to said epicardial surface such that cardiac conductive tissue is ablated around the circumference of the heart.

70. (New) The method of claim 69 wherein the gripping step is carried out by encircling the heart with the gripping device.

71. (New) The method of claim 69 wherein said step of applying said ablator comprises applying radio frequency energy to said ablator.

72. (New) The method of claim 69 wherein said step of applying said ablator comprises applying laser energy to said ablator.

73. (New) The method of claim 69 wherein said step of applying said ablator comprises applying ultrasound energy to said ablator.

74. (New) The method of claim 69, wherein the providing step is carried out with a plurality of ablators disposed on said inner surface of both arms.

75. (New) The method of claim 69 wherein the providing step is carried out with a linearly disposed plurality of electrodes.